

## CLAIMS:

1. A method of processing images, the method comprising the steps of:  
retrieving a source image file including pixel data;  
creating a destination image file buffer;  
mapping the pixel data from the source image file to the destination image file  
buffer; and  
outputting the pixel data from the destination image file buffer as a destination  
image file.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of mapping pixel data  
from the source image file to the destination image file buffer comprises the steps of:  
defining a first set of coordinates of pixels in the destination image file;  
defining a second set of coordinates of pixels in the source image file;  
identifying coordinates of the second set that correspond to coordinates of the  
first set;  
inserting pixel data for pixel locations corresponding the first set of  
coordinates into pixel locations corresponding to the second set of coordinates.
3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the first set of coordinates are  
spherical coordinates and the second set of coordinates are rectangular coordinates.
4. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:  
adding border pixel data to the source image file.
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of mapping the pixel  
data from the source image file to the destination image file buffer includes the step of:  
interpolating the source image pixel data to produce pixel data for the  
destination image file buffer.
6. A method according to claim 1, wherein the source image file includes  
pixel data from a plurality of images, and the step of mapping pixel data from the source  
image file to the destination image file buffer comprises the steps of:  
sequentially mapping pixel data from the plurality of images to the destination  
image file buffer.
7. A method according to claim 1, wherein the source image file  
comprises duplicated pixel data corresponding to pixels in an overlapping region of an image.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the pixel data in the source image file includes opacity data.

9. A method according to claim 1, wherein source image file comprises a panoramic projection image file.

10. A method according to claim 1, wherein destination image file comprises one of: a cylindrical panoramic projection image file, a perspective panoramic projection image file, an equirectangular panoramic projection image file, and an equiangular panoramic projection image file.

11. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of mapping the pixel data from the source image file to the destination image file buffer includes the step of: creating a job function that controls the mapping step.

12. An apparatus for processing images, the apparatus comprising: means for receiving a source image file including pixel data; a processor for creating a destination image file buffer, for mapping the pixel data from the source image file to the destination image file buffer, and for outputting pixel data from the destination image file buffer as a destination image file; and means for displaying an image defined by the destination file.

13. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the processor further serves as means for: defining a first set of coordinates of pixels in the destination image file; defining a second set of coordinates of pixels in the source image file; identifying coordinates of the second set that correspond to coordinates of the first set;

inserting pixel data for pixel locations corresponding the first set of coordinates into pixel locations corresponding to the second set of coordinates.

14. An apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the first set of coordinates are spherical coordinates and the second set of coordinates are rectangular coordinates.

15. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein source image file includes:

border pixel data.

16. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein source image pixel data for each pixel includes opacity information.

17. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the processor further serves as means for:

interpolating the source image pixel data to produce pixel data for the destination image file buffer.

5 18. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein source image file comprises a panoramic projection image file.

19. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein destination image file comprises one of: a cylindrical panoramic projection image file, a perspective panoramic projection image file, an equirectangular panoramic projection image file, and an equiangular panoramic projection image file.

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